

United States Senate

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

February 28, 2019

Dear Secretary Chao,

I write to support the Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT) grant application for the 2019 Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program to fund safety and capacity improvements on Interstate 17, a key commercial and recreational route now subject to congestion and repeated crash-related closures.

I-17 serves as the sole connection between the I-10 and I-40 highways, making it essential to trade and tourism across Arizona. It is the main route that links the state's population and commercial centers, including international ports of entry, to the American Midwest. It also serves millions of Arizona's residents and tourists each year, allowing them to access the state's vibrant cities and public lands.

With only four lanes, I-17 currently lacks the capacity to meet commercial and recreational demands. It regularly suffers from serious delays, and even minor accidents can lead to a full closure. The only detour in the event of a closure is over 180 miles.

This proposal provides funding for an additional northbound and southbound lane, as well as "flex lanes" between Black Canyon City and Sunset Point. "Flex lanes" can change direction based upon traffic conditions and accidents. These improvements will allow ADOT to better meet the needs of trade and tourism across the state, and crucially provide first responders more expedient access to crash scenes.

This project is necessary and important for our state and fits well within the INFRA guidelines and criteria. ADOT is prepared to provide up to 50% of the total project cost, but the INFRA grant is necessary to turn the ADOT proposal into a reality. For these purposes, I write in support of ADOT's application for the INFRA grant program and I request in accordance with all applicable rules, regulations, and guidelines you fully consider the project application.

Sincerely,



Martha McSally
United States Senator